



ANDREW STARZOMSKI, PhD, R.Psych.(N.S.) Psychologist, East Coast Forensic Hospital

Dr. Andrew Starzomski is a forensic and clinical psychologist with the adult mental health system in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He works closely with clients and the community, striving to create better outcomes for clients and families. He is also interested in fostering more accurate public awareness and openness about such issues as mental illness, suicide, violence and social isolation. In addition to working within traditional psychological assessment and treatment frameworks, he is vigorously incorporating the use of film, music and visual art in his work with clients and building bridges with community groups with similar outlooks. You can find that work at the 'eastcoastartsandfilm' channel on youtube.com. He is involved in leadership responsibilities in the Halifax mental health system, including membership in a group that is upgrading assessment, intervention and staff training processes in relation to suicide in the mental health system there. Andrew is also the practice leader for the psychologists in the Halifax area's adult mental health system. He uses these various roles and opportunities to keep a focus on the need to engage the community in ever more meaningful and visible ways - to have mental health become an increasingly valued part of the city's informal and formal social fabric. In 2010 he created a fund to provide support to those who have lost a loved one to suicide with the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia, which was launched at a successful music and arts benefit show featuring award-winning musician David Myles. He is now spearheading Atlantic Minds Wide Open, a mental health and community development film festival in Halifax for November 2011. Stay up to date with him on Twitter: @halifaxhappines.

Andrew initiated contact with the Collateral Damage Project in mid-2010 as part of a process of working through losses linked to suicide encountered in his workplace, with both clients and colleagues. Since that time he has corresponded frequently with the Project and looks forward to further promoting the group's work and potential in Atlantic Canada. He has found the energy, commitment and focus of the Collateral Damage Project to be a very special bright light on the Canadian mental health community landscape. The grassroots vision of bringing together people from many walks of life for the purposes of making important social change is one he eagerly supports.

